

House Bill 282 by Representative Ron Erickson  
A bill to provide for Sequestration of CO 2 to slow Global Warming  
House Natural Resources Committee – February 2, 2007  
TESTIMONY OF THE MONTANA CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, my name is Jonathan Matthews. I was elected by the 2200 members of Montana Chapter of the Sierra Club to represent their interests by serving them on the Club's Executive Committee and by coming to talk to you when legislation affecting our Montana Constitutional right to a clean and healthy environment comes before your consideration. I am a volunteer. I have taken time off work to come talk to you today. Please accept my testimony today on behalf of the 2200 members of the Montana Sierra Club in support of House Bill 282.

The Helena Independent Record this morning reports the long-awaited findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – a Panel jointly established by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Program. In this report, the conservative consensus of scientists from 154 countries is that there's a 90-plus percent chance that humans are causing global warming. They say by 2100, temperatures will likely rise 3.2 to 7.1 degrees Fahrenheit, and sea levels will rise 7 to 23 inches, plus another 4 to 8 inches if polar ice sheets keep melting. "Anyone who would continue to risk inaction on the basis of the evidence presented here will one day in the history books be considered irresponsible," said Achim Steiner, who heads the U.N. Environment Program. Even the normally reluctant White House supported the findings, with a science and technology policy staffer saying it "will be valuable to policymakers."

The University of East Anglia's Climatic Research Unit, which has been keeping accurate temperature measurements since 1850, states that the top 10 warmest years have all occurred in the last 12 years. Ice core measurements from the Vostok glacier in Antarctica (in which air bubbles trapped in ice can be analyzed to discover the composition of the air when the ice formed) reveal that present-day CO2 levels are far higher than at any time in the last 140,000 years, and that they've spiked dramatically in the last 150 years, the period of intensive industrialization and population growth.

It is commonplace to find at least one, if not several, news articles each week reporting on the impacts of Global Warming on our planet. Whether it's the eminent demise of the glaciers in the Alps (two weeks ago news), the report that a 45 square mile chunk of ice had broken off the Canadian coast (two months ago) or the eminent demise of the glaciers in Glacier Nation Park (about a year ago), there is no denying that Global Warming is advancing, and that humans are accelerating and exacerbating that change.

The evidence proves that Global Warming is occurring, and most agree that it is caused by human activities. A rapidly growing consensus is forming that says we must do what we can to slow down that process and mitigate the severity of its conclusion. And, a large group of diverse citizens, including those representing conservation, human resources,

world leaders, scientists, and the energy industry itself are concluding that carbon sequestration is one piece of the puzzle needed to achieve this goal.

So, now you have before you House Bill 282, a measure to require the Board of Environmental Review to "establish requirements for the capture, transportation, and storage of carbon dioxide or the offsetting of carbon dioxide at coal-fired electrical generation and synthetic fuel facilities." We think that this is not only a good idea, but it is extremely timely, as well.

We believe that it's the logical step for the State of Montana to start now to develop the regulatory, monitoring and mitigation framework needed to assure that if Montana chooses to develop and expand its coal-based energy production, it will be done right. If industry wants assurances that what they invest in will meet the regulatory requirements regarding public safety, water quality, land ownership rights, etc., they will need those things defined. Montana already exports 50% of the power produced in the state. New power plants will likely be selling energy out of state. Recently, California passed legislation stating that any energy it buys from out of state must come from power plants that meet the same, tough carbon-emission requirements that exist in California. Failure to approve House Bill 282 may lead to a situation where Montana power producers cannot sell their power. This bill instructs the Board of Environmental Review to begin now to develop the regulations needed to set the stage for the use of an emerging technology as we seek to provide our nation with the power it needs, protect the air, land and water quality our citizens deserve and contribute to the effort to battle Global Warming for the sake of our children and our children's children.

We urge this committee to give your favorable consideration to passage of HB 282.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to the committee. Please contact me if you have any questions.

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